

# Evils of Foreign Immigration

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A Graduation Thesis

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Evils of Foreign Emigration

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The recent movement, in the United States, called the American movement, has begun a work, which long ago should have claimed the attention of our statesmen and moralists - the work of resisting the flood of immigration, which is being poured in upon us.

Fifty years, of eventful history, have been quietly piling up the proofs of our national peril, till now, they come down upon us like an avalanche.

During these fifty years, our people have been carelessly indifferent, to all dangers arising from immigration, even rash, in their inducements to foreigners, to come to America; and now, not until our country begins to assume evil conditions similar to all those to be found in Europe, do they say, enough.

Such indifference can be attributed only, to one of the greatest evils of the American people - political apathy, the belief, that we are a chosen people and that the Almighty stands pledged to our

prosperity. Probably not one in a hundred, of our population, has ever questioned, the security of the future. Such optimism is as senseless, as pessimism is faithless. The one is as foolish as the other is wicked.

Worse than indifference, it has been the custom, of political parties, to offer inducements to foreigners for their votes, to make the growth of said vote as easy and as extensive as possible. But the coming successful party must take a firm stand, in favor of Americans to govern America.

Thoughtful men see, perils on our national horizon. That the moral fiber of this nation has been greatly enfeebled and degraded, by the dumping upon our shores of the racial chaff of Europe, during a century, causes alarm among the most thoughtful and capable men.

It is seen, that the ridiculous asylum theory threatens the republic already, with perils of the gravest character and that, to con-

time, in the application of that theory, would be to follow a road that leads to the sure destruction of our much vaunted edifice of political liberty.

The humblest workman, with an honest purpose and a loyal heart, following the guide of a natural impulse, and the most learned philosopher, following the light of the coldest reason, arrive together, at the same place and perfectly agree, in the same conclusion - that the presence among us, of a large body of Socialists, Anarchists, Nihilists, Unitarians and other social creeds, from the old world, is a danger, which threatens the destruction of our national edifice, by the erosion of its moral foundations.

It is high time, to call a halt, upon our national foolishness, displayed, in inviting into our house and taking to our tender political bosom the immoral vicious and ignorant creeds, of all the earth. Better, infinitely better, for America would it be, to reverse the practice and

apply the declaration, that foreign  
affecouring shall go.

The immediate and direct effects  
of the immigration, of these foreign-  
ers, are alone sufficient to warrant  
in restricting their coming; but,  
when we study the question and  
see the inevitable and more ter-  
rible results, that must follow  
from the presence of such an ele-  
ment in our population, and which  
will have a tendency to increase  
and grow more terrible, as time  
proceeds, and the number of im-  
migrants increase we should not longer hesitate.

There are of course many wor-  
thy immigrants, from every country  
in Europe. Some countries furnish  
a class more vicious and immoral  
than others, and, to make a careful  
study of those from each nation sepa-  
rately, it will be found, that the  
immigrants from each country are  
not producers of all the evils to  
be considered and that some  
nations will be almost entirely free  
from any of the faults with which  
immigration, in general, is charged.  
But it will be found, that some

of each nation contribute, to some of the evils and, in making such a study, we can well take them in one general class - immigrants.

The immediate results we experience, from manifestations of their character and disposition.

In their characterization of poverty, ignorance, heathenism, drunkenness, and libertinism; do we see the terrible influence they are diffusing throughout our land.

The U.S. Consul, at Zurich, writes that scarcely an immigrant ship lands, upon our shores, that does not contain, dozens of paupers, paid to come here, mixed with jail-birds, fleeing from justice, and readily permitted to escape. A large part have been either failures, at home or unfortunate and unlucky men, so called, who can never prosper anywhere. No small part are adventurers, seeking fortunes political and otherwise, in a country, where they have good reason to believe the most worthless may rise to position.



From this latter class, it is so short a step, to the more vicious class, that the effect may well be called immediate.

All immigrants, who come to America, we can safely say, are cursed with poverty. Poverty curses the lands from which they came and, on that account, do they fly from their old homes, to our land, where they think prosperity and success awaits them.

Formerly, there was no objection to the poverty stricken immigrant; because, if he possessed the ability to work and a moderate amount of skill, the unoccupied lands and the undeveloped resources, of the country made his chances, of lifting himself above the miseries of his condition, into a worthy citizen. But now, that the unoccupied land is nearly all exhausted and the great natural resources are being rapidly developed, this chance no longer remains open to those, who come here without capital, and they become a positive curse to the nation.

This part of our immigration, is crowding, into our cities and, unable to make a living, fills up our charitable and penal institutions. In 1880, the foreign born were only thirteen per cent of the entire population, but they furnished, forty three per cent of the inmates, of our work-houses and houses of correction and, it must be borne in mind, that a very large proportion, of the native born inmates, were of foreign parentage.

Ignorance is the veritable companion of poverty; and the number of illiterate immigrants, is almost as shockingly great, as the number of those who come without means. The influence of <sup>ignorance</sup> can not be shown only through other demonstrations to which ignorance leads. In the evils, which develop, in America, ignorance is a corner stone, if not, the whole foundation.

It goes without saying, that there is a dead-level of ignorance and vice, in every republic and, when it is touched by the average citizen, free institutions perish; for intelligence

and virtue are as essential, to the life of a republic, as are brain and heart, to the life of a man.

Immigration is doing much, to bring the average citizen, to that line; for the percentage of illiteracy, among the foreign born, is thirty per cent greater than, among the native born whites.

The heathenism of the American immigrants, embraces a consideration of both, their lack of religion and their immorality. Both combining, to make them as truly heathens as the barbarian.

The moral and religious training, of the average immigrant has been meager or false, his ideas of life are low. Many are without any belief, whatever. That which very many of them have, is but the dictation of an ecclesiastical Autocrat, whom they superstitiously fear and obey. A religion discordant, with both our ideas of a God and state. Not a few hold to the ideas of Mormonism, though it is not generally noticed, or else, wanting in any belief, are easily

and soon recruited, into the  
Mormon ranks. Many more are  
Materialists and skeptics. It is  
certain, that very few adherents, to  
sound christian doctrines, are  
to be found, among this fleeing  
element, of European people.

Moreover, even less religion than  
they possess, is manifested by  
the foreigners, in America. No man  
is held upright simply by the  
strength of his own roots; his branches  
interlock with those of other  
men and thus society is formed.

Few men appreciate the extent,  
to which they are indebted, to  
their surroundings, for the strength  
with which they resist, or do, or suffer.  
All this the emigrant  
leaves behind him. He is isolated  
in a strange land, perhaps doubly  
so, by reason of a strange speech  
and before he is rooted, he is smitten  
with the blast of temptation  
and he falls to the lowest depths  
of immorality. Across the sea,  
they suffer many restraints, which  
are here removed; and here where  
old associations are broken and

and reputations are left behind they sink to a lower moral level.

Our population, of foreign extraction, is sadly conspicuous, in our criminal records & In 1880, this element furnished seventy five percent of the crime. The hoodlums and roughs of our cities, are most of them American born, of foreign parentage. Of the six hundred and eighty discharged convicts, who applied to the Prison Association of New York, for aid, during the year 1882, 442 were born, in the U.S. against 238 foreign born, while only 144 reported native parentage.

These statistics, everywhere, show, that it is the foreign element, of our population, that produces our criminals.

Moreover, immigration not only furnishes the greater portion of our criminals but is also seriously affecting the morals of the native population. Most foreigners bring with them, their continental ideas of the Sabbath and the result is sadly manifest, in all our cities, where it is being transformed from a holy day into

a holiday.

Immigration it is which has fed fat the liquor power. The liquor traffic is chiefly carried on by foreigners and they too are the ones who consume by far the largest part of it.

In 1880 of the traders and dealers in liquors and wines (It is supposed that this means wholesale dealers) sixty three per cent were foreign born and of the brewers and maltsters seventy five per cent, while a large proportion of the remainder were of foreign parentage. Of saloon keepers about sixty per cent were foreign born while many of the remainder ~~was~~ forty per cent were of foreign extraction. Nearly all of the different classes immigrants are liquor drinking people; but what proportion of each nation are not at hand to indicate. The question of the evil which intemperance makes needs no discussion.

The lowest form of immorality the practice of libertinism is indulged in to a shocking extent



by our foreign people & In our cities, where such licentiousness is practiced, most, and where the subject can only be investigated, the pictures of this lowest form of immorality, presented by the foreigners, are shockingly terrible. In a report, of such an investigation, it is stated: - That most of the facts have had to be toned down or wholly omitted & No respectable printer would print and no decent family would admit, even the direct statement, of the horrors and infamies discovered, in one brief visitation from house to house.

Such are the characteristics of American immigrants, the evils which they bring with them, to our shores & Such the foundation, upon which they build, their greater engines of destruction & With such materials, can we doubt the possibility of their excess? They are here, here in numbers, with all these evils, and must be watched, to prevent the working of greater evils.

The subject of land crowding, has already been mentioned, under a discussion of the subject of poverty of immigrants; but, as one of the growing evils, it demands much more attention; for it is a condition which fosters and develops all the other evils to be feared.

Besides the necessity of crowding into cities, which the occupying of all farming lands compels, the city has a peculiar attraction for the immigrant. Our fifty principle cities contain 39.3 per cent of our entire <sup>German</sup> population and 45.8 per cent of the Irish. Our ten largest cities contain only 9 per cent of the entire population; but 23 per cent of the foreign. While a little less than one third of the population of the U.S. is foreign, by birth or parentage, 62 per cent of the population of Cincinnati are foreign, 69 per cent of Cleveland, 63 per cent of Boston, 88 per cent of New York, and 91 per cent of Chicago.

The first great evil, arising from the crowding of our cities, is the effect upon the laboring classes.



In America, wages have been higher, than are paid, in Europe; and foreigners are glad to get work to do, at a very slight advance over the European price; but at a very great reduction over the American price.

Competition enters in very extensively and works disaster, in laboring bodies.

Wages are reduced below a living price & the number of idle men is increased, by foreigners unable to get work and disappointed at not meeting with the success they had anticipated, they begin to develop their European ideas of Socialism. Immigration is the mother of Socialism and, with immigration increasing, the number of idle foreigners will increase as will the number of American workmen, unable to meet the competition for work, out of employment. These will swell the ranks of the Socialists, to give them the power, to threaten the existence of our social and civil regulations. There are yet two influences largely due to foreigners that are growing and will be felt unless checked by restraint.

ing immigration. The reference is made to Mormonism and Catholicism.

There are many who are disposed to attribute any fear of Roman Catholicism, in the U.S., to bigotry or childishness; but we know, that a comparison reveals the fact, that the fundamental principles of our government and the Catholic church, are at war.

We can not be too sure, that there is little danger to be apprehended from the Catholics, on account of their weakness of numbers.

They are bold and their wealth in America is immense. Examination shows, that the growth of the Catholic Church corresponds closely, with that of foreign immigration, but is somewhat more rapid. It is a fact, of the Catholics, that they will yet have the U.S. under the domination of the Pope and we can not afford, to have the experiment tried.

Mormonism is not simply a church, but a state; an imperium in imperio, ruled by a man who is prophet, priest, king and

Pope, all in one. There is no doubt, that it is becoming less and less a religious power and more and more a political power. The eyes of the Mormons are now dazzled with the vision of an earthly empire. They have gone back to the old Jewish idea, of a temporal kingdom and they are endeavoring to set up such a kingdom, in the valleys of Utah and Idaho; and Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico, Arizona and Nevada. With this in view, the church sends out from 200 to 400 missionaries a year, most of whom, labor in Europe. If any of the converts are too poor to reach America, they are assisted by loans from the Perpetual Emigration Fund. With these facts in view, we can not look upon Mormonism as a harmless institution and must charge, to immigration, much of its recent growth.

Foreigners, in America, have an alarming power over the political affairs of our country. Without any restrictions, they are granted the

privileges of the ballot, a power to overthrow all that does not harmonize with their views, no matter what their views may be or what their motives. Immigration tends strongly, to our cities, and gives them their political complexion and there is no more serious menace to our civilization, than our rabble-ruled cities. As we have already seen, it is immigration which has fed the liquor power and there is a liquor vote. Immigration furnishes us with Mormonism and Catholicism and there is a Mormon and a Catholic vote. Immigration too gives us our socialism and a socialist vote.

Many Americans are not Americanized. It is as unfortunate, as it is natural, that foreigners, in this country, should cherish their own language and peculiar customs and carry their nationality, as a distinct factor into our politics. Immigration has created the "German vote" and the "Irish vote"; for which politicians bid and which have already been

decisive of state elections and might, easily determine national. A mass of men, but little acquainted with our institutions, who will act in concert and who will be controlled largely, by their appetites and prejudices constitute a very paradise for demagogues.

This is a tendency, toward centralized power. The capitalist and corporation find many ways to control thousands of votes. A vote in a city may be decided by a "boss" or a capitalist or a corporation which may change the policy of the whole state or of the nation. It matters not, by what name we call the man, who wields this centralized power, just so far as it is absolute, and irresponsible, it is dangerous.

If immigration continue, we have but a short time to wait until our present large cities are Londons; when class antipathies are deepened; when socialistic organizations are in every city; when the corruption of city governments is grown apace; when the price of bread is doubled; with starvation in the home; with idle men gathered, sullen and desperate, in the saloons;